

Masonry Contractors

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September 14, 2012

Mr. Ray Allshouse, Chair Washington State Building Code Council PO Box 41449 Olympia, WA 98504-1449

Mr. Chairman and Council Members:

My name is Ian Anderson of Anderson Masonry, Inc. I am the President of the Mason Contractors Association of Spokane. I am also a Board member of the Masonry Industry Promotion Group of Spokane. We represent masonry subcontractors, small businesses employing union labor in Washington State. I support the testimony offered by Mr. Tom Young. His point that the mass wall provisions of proposed Option 1 are not cost-effective for building owners should be given strong consideration. With efforts by some to continually make the energy code more stringent, there comes a point when you no longer have a reasonable payback period to offset the increased construction cost. Cost-effectiveness is gone and the economy is negatively impacted. We are at that point now with masonry walls.

It is important to note that Option 1 would prohibit the common use of integrally insulated single-width concrete masonry block walls for all nonresidential building types. Such walls are built with insulation placed inside the wall in the open cores. Most likely stud-wall framing, insulation, gyp board and paint would be added to the wall interior for compliance with Option 1. This eliminates many of the sustainable properties of the block wall including durability, fire safety, VOC reduction, and mold/mildew resistance. If a frame wall assembly must be constructed behind a structural block wall it is an inefficient use of building materials and increases construction costs without comparable energy savings.

This is a bad time to impose more restrictive construction regulations. Union bricklayer man-hours of employment are down 70%. Proposed Option 1 would disadvantage our industry during an economic downturn. We urge you to approve Option 2 for the prescriptive thermal envelope R and U-value tables for mass wall assemblies. It represents an incremental change in energy code requirements.

The opportunity to speak on this important issue is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Ian Anderson

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